

of God were ascending and descending, and that the Lord stood above and talked with him, prophesying concerning his posterity. Jacob awoke and said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and this is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven." Gen. 28:17. King David, the man after God's own heart, when he praised God for his mercies, said, "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will go into them for to praise the Lord." The king petitioned the Lord to have mercy, and the Lord lifted him from the gates of death. Jesus used the term "gate" when he explained the entrance and way to salvation. He illustrates the spiritual by literal things in order to reach our understanding. Our dear Master in the seventh chapter of Matthew represents two gates which portray two ways. The one opens to the way leading to destruction, the other to life everlasting. Jesus says, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it; but wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." As our dear Savior went thro the cities teaching, he confirmed and established these solemn facts. Journeying toward Jerusalem he met with one, who, being free from timidity, and in an indifferent manner, said to him, "Lord are there few that be saved?" This person had a great and glorious privilege of asking the great Savior of mankind questions. Who would not wish to participate in such peculiar advantages? Yet the inquiry was made by one who did not appreciate his opportunities. And more than all, he did not appear in earnest in seeking his own salvation. Yet Jesus manifested great compassion, kindly answering his questions. With earnest words of sympathy He said unto them, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." It is a fact that only a few set their minds and hearts to do our Master's will. It is manifest that they are enticed after the things of the world, and do but faintly seek to enter in at the "strait" gate. With this faint striving they will not be able. It is thro tribulation we pass. Without great labor and vigorous effort we cannot enter the pearly gates of the eternal city of love. "And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Rev. 7:13, 14.

To enter the "strait gate" is to accept Christ and his scheme of redemption—to live the life of a Christian. I have

read about the beautiful gates of the New Jerusalem: I have heard them preached about. To me it is a beautiful story. There are three to each point of compass—on the north three gates, on the south three gates, on the east three gates, on the west three gates. Each gate is a solid pearl, and the streets of the city are pure gold, and the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. The city has no need of the sun, neither of the moon, for the glory of God and the Lamb is the light thereof. The gates shall not be shut at all by day, for there shall be no night there. There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life. See Rev. 2. Oh, may every earnest, God-born soul ask, "Is my name of a truth written in the Lamb's book of life?" May we all have a right to enter in thro the gates into the city. There will be a passport at the gate of heaven; our passport must contain the requirements of Jesus or we cannot pass. These requirements are the commandments of God. Oh, let us strive to do the commandments, for "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14. What excuse can we offer for rejecting the glad tidings which Jesus brought from heaven? Can we not behold the breadth and depth of this gospel which says, "The Spirit and the Bride say come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." Whosoever, wheresoever; however far we have wandered from God we can come back. Tho we have violated all of the ten commandments "whosoever" will let him come: for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin. 1 John 1:7. What plea or defense in justification can guilty mankind offer to the offended Creator, who opened a way of mercy for us? Will we refuse his gracious pardon and go down to everlasting ruin and degradation? Just remember there are only two gates and ways before us, and the power of choosing has been imparted to us. Oh, let us be as King David said, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, I will go into them for to praise the Lord." "Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in and shall not be able." "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations." Ps. 100:4, 5.

Auburn, Ill.

Work works wonders.

## THOUGHTS WITH WHICH TO BEGIN THE NEW YEAR

J. C. MACKEY

There has been a steady flow of zeal during the past year, throughout our brotherhood, in connection with the work of Christ's cause and kingdom in the world; and many souls, by the power of God, through divinely appointed means, have been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Encouraging additions have been made to the majority of our congregations as a result in a large measure of the evangelistic labors of our ministers. God's mercy has crowned the year, and we may thank our divine Father and take courage. But the responsibilities of the future follow hard on the favors of the past, and great things must be expected.

As a church we should be careful to give proper attention to the vital questions of the day. To our many good and necessary institutions temperance organizations ought to be added in the several congregations, and meetings held as frequently as convenient for the presentation of temperance principles, and the discussion of total abstinence and the extinction of the liquor traffic. I believe the Brethren church should be a unit in favor of prohibition by law of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drink.

There is another grave question, *the relation of government and national life to the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which is coming more and more into prominence. This subject, it seems to me, is not sufficiently treated in our ministerial work. There are societies and they are strengthening day by day, that are holding public meetings and endeavoring to mould popular sentiment on this question in accordance with Bible truth. And the aim of your pastors, along this line, should be, in their pulpit performances, to propagate the fundamental principles touching the relation which the nation ought to sustain to the blessed Christ. I regard with much significance, as well as pleasure, the fact that President Cleveland in his proclamation for Thanksgiving day, during his administration, made a distinct recognition of the Christ as the channel through whom thanks are to be offered to the God of the universe. This shows that under the constitution, Christianity as distinguished from all other forms of faith is the religion of our nation, and that the highest name transcribed on the temple of civilization is CHRISTIANITY; and let wave of liberty rise higher and still higher, the same sacred name shall be found on its crest to tell from father to son that there lived a noble people who fought freedom's battle when her star had sunk in the night, and gave such an impulse to Christianity that infidelity is left cringing in its lowest depth. We may now listen to the angels' song glow-